

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) In a relationship between an information provider and a plurality of subscribers, each of the subscribers being associated with an alert gateway and a corresponding distribution address, a system for providing an alert to a subscriber, the system comprising:

an alert receiver configured to receive an alert message from at least one alert source, the alert message being pertinent to at least one of the subscribers and comprising an alert and associated alert information, the alert information providing information about the alert, such the alert information can be analyzed to determine whether a particular subscriber should receive the alert;

an alert distribution device in communication with the alert receiver and further in communication with a communication network, wherein the alert distribution device is configured to:

select, based on the alert information, a set of one or more distribution addresses to which the alert applies; and

transmit the alert to the selected set of distribution addresses via the communication network; and

an alert gateway at a subscriber location in communication with the communication network, wherein the alert gateway is:

associated with one of the distribution addresses;

adapted to receive the alert from the alert distribution device; and

configured to take at least one specific action with respect to the alert.

2. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the alert comprises urgent public information.

3. (Original) The system of claim 2, wherein the urgent public information is selected from a group consisting of an Emergency Alert System transmission, an Amber Alert, a severe weather notification, and a Homeland Security Advisory notification.

4. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the alert gateway is incorporated within a network interface device.

5. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the alert gateway is in communication with a network interface device.

6. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the alert information is incorporated within the alert.

7. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the alert information is additional to the alert.

8. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the alert distribution device is further configured to extract the alert information from the alert message.

9. (Original) The system of claim 8, wherein the alert distribution device is further configured to analyze the alert information to determine the set of one or more distribution addresses to which the alert applies.

10. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the communication network is selected from a group consisting of a radio-frequency transmission, a telephone network, a cable television distribution network, the Internet, a fiber-optic network, a high-speed data network, a wireless network, and a microwave network.

11. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the communication network is a plurality of communication networks and wherein, for a particular distribution

address, the alert distribution device is configured to select the most appropriate communication network via which to transmit the alert information to the particular distribution address.

12. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the at least one specific action comprises transmitting a confirmation message to the alert distribution device, wherein the confirmation message indicates that the alert was received by the alert gateway.

13. (Original) The system of claim 12, wherein the alert gateway is configured to transmit the confirmation message via the communication network.

14. (Original) The system of claim 12, wherein the alert distribution device is configured to retransmit the alert to the distribution address associated with the alert gateway in the event that a confirmation message has not been received from the alert gateway within a certain period of time.

15. (Original) The system of claim 14, wherein:
the communication network is a first communication network;
the alert distribution device is further in communication with a second communication network, which is also in communication with the alert gateway; and
the alert distribution device is configured to select the second communication network for retransmission of the alert.

16. (Original) The system of claim 1, further comprising an alert processing device in communication with at least one of the alert distribution device and the alert gateway, wherein the alert processing device is configured to process the alert.

17. (Original) The system of claim 16, wherein the alert receiver incorporates the functionality of the alert processing device.

18. (Original) The system of claim 16, wherein the alert gateway incorporates the functionality of the alert processing device.

19. (Original) The system of claim 16, wherein the alert distribution device incorporates the functionality of the alert processing device.

20. (Original) The system of claim 16, wherein the alert comprises audio information, and processing the alert comprises translating the audio information into textual information.

21. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 20, wherein translating the audio information comprises extracting closed-captioning information from a the video signal.

22. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 20-24, wherein translating the audio information comprises converting a speech portion of the audio information to text.

23. (Original) The system of claim 16, wherein the alert comprises text, and wherein processing the alert comprises converting the text to audio information.

24. (Original) The system of claim 16, wherein the alert is encoded, and wherein processing the alert comprises decoding the alert.

25. (Original) The system of claim 24, where the alert is encoded with event and location information conforming to the Emergency Alert System standards, and wherein processing the alert comprises interpreting the event and location information.

26. (Original) The system of claim 25, wherein processing the alert further comprises determining, based on the event and location information, the set of one or more distribution addresses.

27. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the system further comprises an alert notification device coupled to the alert gateway, and wherein the at least one specific action comprises activating the alert notification device to inform a subscriber about the alert.

28. (Original) The system of claim 27, wherein informing a subscriber about the alert comprises playing an audible signal.

29. (Original) The system of claim 28, wherein the audible signal comprises at least one alert tone.

30. (Original) The system of claim 28, wherein the audible signal comprises an audio signal associated with the alert.

31. (Original) The system of claim 27, wherein informing a subscriber about the alert comprises displaying a visual alert signal.

32. (Original) The system of claim 31, wherein the visual alert signal comprises at least one indicator light.

33. (Original) The system of claim 31, wherein the visual alert signal comprises a video signal associated with the alert.

34. (Original) The system of claim 31, wherein the visual alert signal comprises a text message associated with the alert.

35. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the at least one specific action comprises transmitting the alert to at least one subscriber device.

36. (Original) The system of claim 35, wherein the at least one subscriber device includes a set of features associated with the at least one subscriber device, the alert gateway being configured to process the alert according to the set of features associated with the at least one subscriber device prior to sending the alert to the at least one subscriber device.

37. (Original) The system of claim 35, wherein the at least one subscriber device is a plurality of subscriber devices.

38. (Original) The system of claim 37, wherein each of the plurality of subscriber devices includes a set of features associated with that subscriber device, the alert gateway being configured to process the alert according to the set of features associated with each particular subscriber device prior to sending the alert to that particular subscriber device.

39. (Original) The system of claim 35, wherein the subscriber device is selected from the group consisting of a wireless telephone, a POTS telephone, an IP telephone, a personal computer, laptop computer, a handheld computer, a webpad, a television, a set-top box, and a pager.

40. (Original) The system of claim 35, wherein the at least one specific action further comprises anticipating a confirmation message from the at least one subscriber device indicating that the alert was received.

41. (Original) The system of claim 40, wherein, if no confirmation message is received from the subscriber device within a certain time interval, the at least one specific action further comprises retransmitting the alert.

42. (Original) The system of claim 41, wherein the alert is retransmitted to the subscriber device.

43. (Original) The system of claim 41, wherein the alert is retransmitted to a second subscriber device.

44. (Original) The system of claim 40, wherein, if no notification is received from the subscriber device within a certain time interval, the at least one specific action further comprises transmitting a failure message to the alert distribution device.

45. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the alert distribution device is in communication with a storage medium, the storage medium being configured to store selection criteria associated with each of a plurality of distribution addresses, the alert distribution device being configured to select at least one distribution address to which the alert

applies based on a correlation between the alert information and a selection criterion for the at least one distribution address.

46. (Original) The system of claim 45, wherein the selection criterion is selected from the group consisting of a subscriber's geographic location, a subscriber's personal information, a subscriber's entertainment preferences, a subscriber's school location, and a subscriber's financial information.

47. (Currently Amended) In a relationship between an information provider and a plurality of subscribers, each of the subscribers being associated with an alert gateway and a corresponding distribution address, a method for providing an alert to a subscriber, the method comprising:

receiving an alert message from at least one alert source, the alert message being pertinent to at least one of the subscribers and comprising an alert and associated alert information, the alert information providing information about the alert, such the alert information can be analyzed to determine whether a particular subscriber should receive the alert;

selecting, based on the nature of the alert, a set of one or more distribution addresses to which the alert pertains; and

transmitting the alert to an alert gateway at a subscriber location and associated with one of the set of distribution addresses.

48. (Original) The method of claim 47, wherein the alert comprises urgent public information.

49. (Original) The method of claim 48, wherein the urgent public information is selected from a group consisting of an Emergency Alert System transmission, an Amber Alert, a severe weather notification, and a Homeland Security Advisory notification.

50. (Original) The method of claim 47, wherein the alert information is incorporated within the alert.

51. (Original) The method of claim 47, wherein the alert information is additional to the alert.

52. (Original) The method of claim 47, further comprising extracting the alert information from the alert message.

53. (Original) The method of claim 52, further comprising analyzing the alert information to determine the set of one or more distribution addresses to which the alert pertains.

54. (Original) The method of claim 47, wherein transmitting the alert to the alert gateway comprises transmitting the alert message to the alert gateway.

55. (Original) The method of claim 47, further comprising:
anticipating a confirmation message from the alert gateway; and
if no confirmation message is received within a certain time interval,
retransmitting the alert.

56. (Original) The method of claim 55, wherein:
transmitting the alert comprises transmitting the alert via a first path; and
retransmitting the alert comprises transmitting the alert via a second path.

57. (Original) The method of claim 55, wherein:
transmitting the alert comprises transmitting the alert via a specific path; and
retransmitting the alert comprises transmitting the alert a second time via the same
path.

58. (Original) The method of claim 47, further comprising processing the alert.

59. (Original) The method of claim 58, wherein the alert comprises audio information, and processing the alert comprises translating the audio information into textual information.

60. (Original) The method of claim 59, wherein translating the audio information comprises extracting closed-captioning information from a video signal.

61. (Original) The method of claim 58, wherein the alert comprises text, and wherein processing the alert comprises converting the text to audio information.

62. (Original) The method of claim 58, wherein the alert is encoded, and wherein processing the alert comprises decoding the alert.

63. (Original) The method of claim 62, where the alert is encoded with event and location information conforming to the Emergency Alert System standards, and wherein processing the alert comprises interpreting the event and location information.

64. (Original) The method of claim 47, further comprising:
receiving the alert at the alert gateway; and
taking a specific action in response to the alert.

65. (Original) The method of claim 64, wherein taking a specific action comprises informing the subscriber about the alert.

66. (Original) The method of claim 65, wherein informing the subscriber about the alert comprises playing an audible signal.

67. (Original) The method of claim 66, wherein the audible signal comprises at least one alert tone.

68. (Original) The method of claim 66, wherein the audible signal comprises at an audio signal associated with the alert.

69. (Original) The method of claim 65, wherein informing the subscriber about the alert comprises displaying a visual alert signal.

70. (Original) The method of claim 69, wherein the visual alert signal comprises at least one indicator light.

71. (Original) The method of claim 69, wherein the visual alert signal comprises a video signal associated with the alert.

72. (Original) The method of claim 69, wherein the visual alert signal comprises a text message associated with the alert.

73. (Original) The method of claim 64, wherein taking a specific action comprises transmitting the alert to at least one subscriber device.

74. (Original) The method of claim 73, wherein the at least one subscriber device includes a set of features associated with the at least one subscriber device, the method further comprising processing the alert according to the set of features associated with the at least one subscriber device prior to sending the alert to the at least one subscriber device.

75. (Original) The method of claim 73, wherein the at least one subscriber device comprises a plurality of subscriber devices.

76. (Original) The method of claim 75, wherein each of the plurality of subscriber devices includes a set of features associated with that subscriber device, the method further comprising processing the alert according to the set of features associated with each particular subscriber device prior to sending the alert to that particular subscriber device.

77. (Original) The method of claim 73, wherein the subscriber device is selected from the group consisting of a wireless telephone, a POTS telephone, an IP telephone, a personal computer, a handheld computer, a television, a set-top box, and a pager.

78. (Original) The method of claim 73, wherein the at least one specific action further comprises anticipating a confirmation message from the at least one subscriber device.

79. (Original) The method of claim 78, wherein, if no confirmation message is received from the at least one subscriber device within a certain time interval, the method further comprises retransmitting the alert.

80. (Original) The method of claim 79, wherein retransmitting the alert comprises retransmitting the alert to the at least one subscriber device.

81. (Original) The method of claim 79, wherein retransmitting the alert comprises transmitting the information to at least one additional subscriber device.

82. (Original) The method of claim 78, wherein, if no confirmation message is received from the at least one subscriber device within a certain time interval, the method further comprises transmitting a failure message to the alert distribution device.

83. (Currently Amended) A system for providing an alert to a subscriber, the system comprising:

means for receiving an alert message from at least one alert source, the alert message being pertinent to at least one of the subscribers and comprising an alert and associated alert information, the alert information providing information about the alert, such the alert information can be analyzed to determine whether a particular subscriber should receive the alert;

means for selecting, based on the nature of the alert, a set of one or more distribution addresses to which the alert pertains; and

means for transmitting the alert to the set of one or more distribution addresses to which the alert pertains, each distribution address being associated with an alert gateway at a subscriber location.~~pertains.~~

84. (Original) The system of claim 83, wherein the alert comprises urgent public information.

85. (Original) The system of claim 84, wherein the urgent public information is selected from a group consisting of an Emergency Alert System transmission, an Amber Alert, a severe weather notification, and a Homeland Security Advisory notification.

86. (Original) The system of claim 83, wherein the alert information is incorporated within the alert.

87. (Original) The system of claim 83, wherein the alert information is additional to the alert.

88. (Original) The system of claim 83, further comprising means for extracting the alert information from the alert message.

89. (Original) The system of claim 83, wherein the means for transmitting the alert is configured to transmit the alert message.

90. (Original) The method of claim 88, further comprising means for analyzing the alert information to determine the set of one or more distribution addresses to which the alert pertains.

91. (Original) The system of claim 83, wherein each of the set of distribution addresses is associated with an alert gateway.

92. (Original) The system of claim 83, further comprising means for anticipating a confirmation message associated with each of the distribution addresses, the

confirmation message associated with a particular distribution address serving to indicate that the alert was received by a device associated with that particular distribution address.

93. (Original) The system of claim 92, further comprising means for retransmitting the alert to a distribution address in the event that a confirmation message associated with that distribution address has not been received within a certain period of time.

94. (Original) The system of claim 83, further comprising:
means for receiving the alert, and, in response to the alert, taking at least one specific action.

95. (Original) The system of claim 94, further comprising means for processing the alert, the means for processing the alert being in communication with the means for receiving the alert.

96. (Original) The system of claim 83, further comprising:
means for processing the alert, the means for processing the alert being in communication with at least one of the means for selecting a set of one or more distribution addresses to which the alert pertains and the means for transmitting the alert.

97. (Currently Amended) In a relationship between an information provider and a plurality of subscribers, each of the subscribers being associated with an alert gateway and a corresponding distribution address, an alert distribution device for providing an alert to a subscriber, the device comprising:

means for receiving an alert message, the alert message comprising an alert and associated alert information;

a processor in communication with the means for receiving an alert message;

means for transmitting an alert to an alert gateway; and

a computer-readable storage medium in communication with the processor, the computer-readable storage medium comprising instructions executable by the processor to:

store on the computer-readable storage medium a directory of alert gateways, each alert gateway being associated with a distribution address;

determine, based on the alert information, a set of one or more distribution addresses to which the alert applies; and

using the means for transmitting an alert to an alert gateway, transmit the alert to a set of alert gateways, wherein each of the alert gateways is located at a subscriber location and is associated with a member of the selected set of distribution addresses.